Summary of the
Biscayne Bay MFLs Technical Discussion Group Meeting
Wednesday, December 17, 2003
SFWMD Miami Field Station

A Biscayne Bay Minimum Flows and Levels (MFLs) Technical Discussion Group Meeting was held on Wednesday, December 17, 2003, at the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) Miami Field Station. A list of attendees is provided at the end of this summary. The presentation presented by SFWMD staff is available at ftp://ftp.sfwmd.gov/pub/ralleman/MFL_external_group_12_17_03_revised.ppt.

The first part of the presentation reviewed the overall purpose and definition of MFLs. Then, the role of the Technical Discussion Group was reviewed as well a summary of the previous meeting. After that, a summary of various on-going technical efforts were presented. And lastly, potential approaches for defining the MFLs technical criteria were presented and discussed.

Some of the main points made during the presentation that are not necessarily included in the hardcopy of the presentation are listed below:

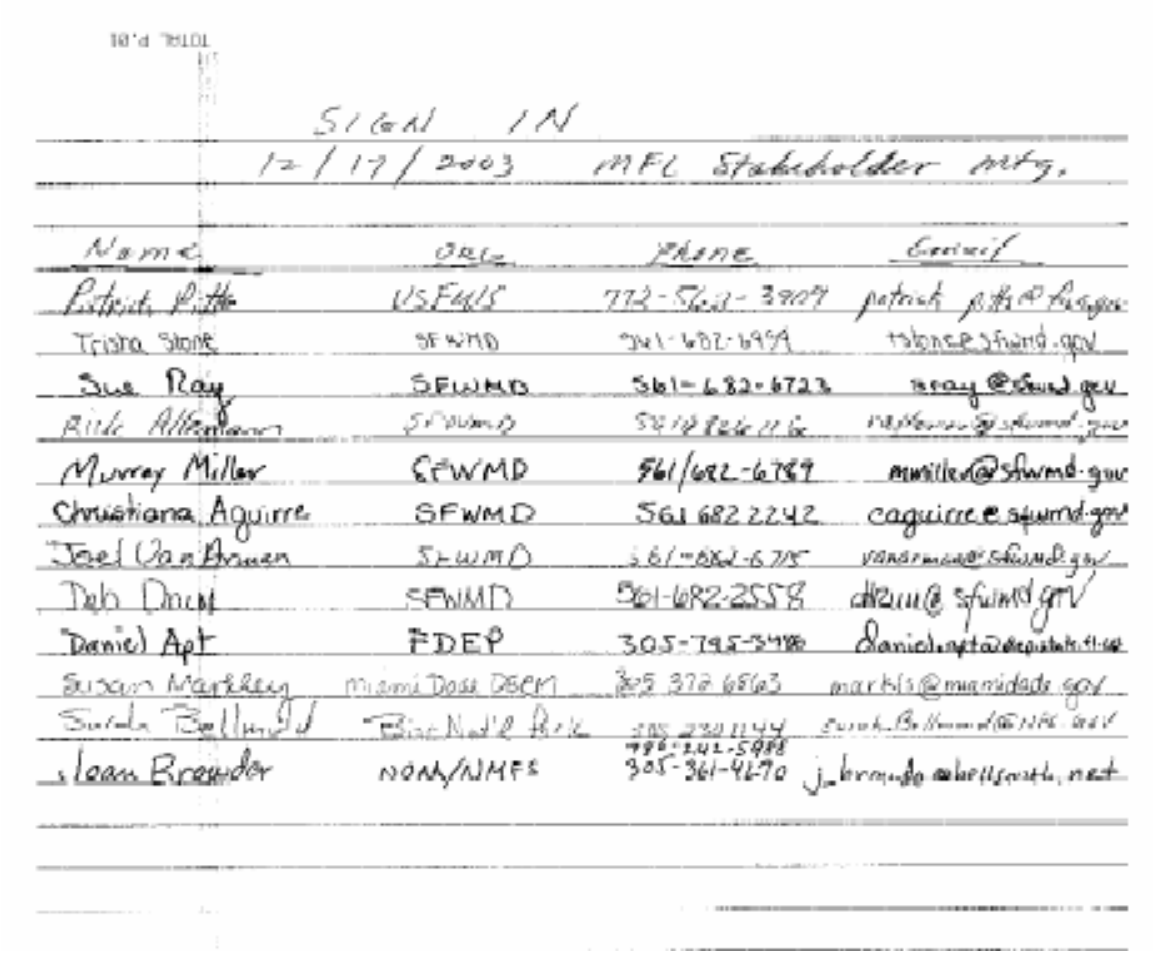
- SFWMD staff is in the process of re-assessing priorities for all MFLs (not just Biscayne Bay).
- The MFL process utilizes best available data.
- The technical criteria defined for the MFLs must be based on substantiated, documented information, citations, and results. Professional judgment alone is not sufficient substantiation for defining a technical criterion.
- Salinity range is not a resource to be protected with an MFL.
- An MFL criteria needs to demonstrate that a particular species/habitat is extremely important to the ecosystem to warrant the potential economic impact of not diverting water from the system during a draught.
- Saltwater intrusion can be an MFL criterion.
- The actual ecological results from the implementation of Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) projects are justifiable reasons to re-evaluate and re-define an existing MFL criterion.
- Biscayne Bay does not have a transition zone like a river. However, it does have a mesoheline zone.
- St. Lucie River MFL had to provide a quantifiable relationship in order to utilize oysters as an indicator species.
- The Ecological Indicators Final Report will be posted for members of the Technical Discussion Group when available.

Below is a compilation of brain-storming items, in no particular order, that were identified by the Technical Discussion Group as potential areas that SFWMD staff may or may not need to be address during the process of defining the technical criteria for the Biscayne Bay MFLs:

- Baseline definition as something other than existing conditions
- Clear distinction between “harm”, “significant harm”, and “serious harm” including which projects/efforts each term is associated with
- Definition, purpose, and implementation method of a “Recovery Plan” and similarities/differences with CERP
- Requesting water for Biscayne Bay
- Comprehensive approach for all water needs
- Relevance of the Biscayne Aquifer MFLs Technical Criteria process to the Biscayne Bay MFLs process
- Relevance of Reservations process to the MFL process
- Possibility of defining technical criteria for the Biscayne Bay Far South region and the Biscayne Bay South Central region at the same time
- Governing Board’s commitment to Biscayne Bay MFL schedule
- Possibility of Biscayne Bay MFLs meeting with/for the general public and users of the Bay
- Relative to the rainfall analysis, possibility of utilizing a longer period of record and a larger geographical area
- Possibility of utilizing both rainfall and groundwater levels to define the 1-in-10 year draught
- Peak flows utilization
- Ability to hindcast
- Technical shortcomings and limitations, if any, of tools being utilized to develop the technical criteria
- Possibility of incorporating new tools as they become available
- Antecedent conditions
- Average only core values (i.e. exclude extreme end values when calculating averages) especially when determining the 1-in-10 year draught
- Mode analysis
- Biscayne National Park (BNP) continuous salinity data, a historical report by Evelyn, information on oysters and isotopes, and information obtained from a contract on corals. *Note: Sarah Bellmund offered to provide this information and a copy of their contract for the coral information to SFWMD staff*.
- Oysters as an indicator species
- Habitat concept for the community as a whole as well as individual indicator species
- Possibility reviewing/modifying the species ranking table process
- Halodule as an indicator species or as the basis for the habitat/community approach

- Study on Young Shrimp that indicates they prefer Halodule. *Note: Joan Browder to provide report to SFWMD staff*.
- Landfill
- Herbicides sprayed in the canals
- Biological performance measures chosen for CERP
- Nutrients and sediment depths
- Sessile organisms
- Storage
- Land acquisition process

Meeting Sign-in Sheet



SIGN IN

12/17/2003 MFL Stakeholder mtg.

Name	Org	Phone	Email
Patrick Pitts	USFWS	772-562-3909	patrick_pitts@fws.gov
Trisha Stone	SFWMD	561-682-6999	tstone@sfwmd.gov
Sue Ray	SFWMD	561-682-6723	sray@sfwmd.gov
Rick Alleman	SFWMD	561/682-6776	rallema@sfwmd.gov
Murray Miller	SFWMD	561/682-6789	mmiller@sfwmd.gov
Christiana Aguirre	SFWMD	561 682 2242	caguirre@sfwmd.gov
Joel VanArnem	SFWMD	561-682-6715	vanarnem@sfwmd.gov
Deb Drum	SFWMD	561-682-2558	ddrum@sfwmd.gov
Daniel Apt	FDEP	305-795-2198	daniel.apt@dep.state.fl.us
Susan Markley	Miami Dade DERM	305 372 6863	markls@miamidade.gov
Sarah Bellmund	Everglades Nat'l Park	305 230 1144	sarah_bellmund@nps.gov
Joan Browder	NOAA/NMFS	305-361-4470	joan.browder@noaa.gov